

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A retraction device ~~[[10]]~~ adapted to temporarily reposition body tissues and organs during a surgical procedure, comprising:

a malleable ring member ~~[[15]]~~ comprising a plurality of bending portions ~~24, 25, 26, 27~~ adapted to be twisted, folded, bent or deformed to be inserted into a surgical incision; and

a membrane ~~[[60]]~~ fixedly attached around the perimeter of the ring member ~~[[15]]~~,

wherein the membrane is a bias-woven or knitted fabric.
2. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the membrane ~~[[60]]~~ is a flexible fabric operable to retain the body tissues and organs of different shapes and sizes.
3. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the membrane ~~[[60]]~~ is capable to retaining both hard and soft body tissues and organs during surgery.

4. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the bending portions ~~24, 25, 26, 27~~ and the membrane ~~[[60]]~~ are taut enough to securely hold and separate hard tissues and organs yet are flexible enough to gently retain soft tissues and organs so as not to damage the tissues and organs or affect their circulation.

5. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the membrane ~~[[60]]~~ is transparent.

6. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the membrane ~~[[60]]~~ is sized and configured to stretch and recover to the shaping and reshaping of the ring member ~~[[15]]~~.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the membrane ~~[[60]]~~ is formed of any elastic material that responds to the shaping and reshaping of the ring member ~~[[15]]~~.

9. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the ring member ~~[[15]]~~ has an oval cross-section providing a preference for bending along the long axis.

10. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the ring member [[15]] has a substantially square cross-section providing equal preference to bending in both axes or planes and resistance to bending diagonally.

11. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the ring member [[15]] has a circular cross-section.

12. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the ring member [[15]] further comprises an internal lumen [[56]] defining a wall [[57]].

13. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 12, wherein the wall [[57]] has a circular cross-section or a cross-section of any geometric shape providing a desired bending bias.

14. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 12, wherein the ring member [[15]] further comprises a reinforcement member [[315]] placed within the lumen [[56]] to provide additional bending bias.

15. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 14, wherein the reinforcement member ~~[[315]]~~ comprises at least a plastic component and a metallic component.

16. (Original) The retraction device of claim 15, wherein the metallic component includes at least one of aluminum, titanium and stainless steel.

17. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 14, wherein the reinforcement member ~~[[315]]~~ is placed in some sections ~~[[28, 29]]~~ of the ring member ~~[[15]]~~ to keep said sections ~~[[28, 29]]~~ substantially straight.

18. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 14, wherein the reinforcement member ~~[[315]]~~ comprises a shape memory material including Nitinol.

19. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 1, wherein the ring member ~~[[15]]~~ comprises a plurality of cords ~~202, 204~~, said cords ~~202, 204~~ are vertically joined at a point ~~[[206]]~~ along vertical axes of the cords ~~202, 204~~.

20. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 19, wherein the cords ~~202, 204~~ have oval cross-sections.

21. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 14, wherein the reinforcement member [[315]] has a first cross-section and the ring member [[15]] has a second cross-section different in shape from the first cross-section.

22. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 21, wherein the first cross-section of the reinforcement member [[315]] is rectangular and the second cross-section of the ring member [[15]] is circular.

23. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 14, wherein each of the ring member [[15]], the reinforcement member [[315]] and the wall [[57]] has a cross-section or a profile of any geometric shape to provide a desired bending bias in a preferred plane.

24. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 21, wherein the reinforcement member [[315]] imparts a different bending bias on the ring member [[15]].

25. (Currently amended) The retraction device of claim 14, wherein the ring member [[325]] further comprises a second lumen [[335]] and a second reinforcement member [[355]] placed within the second lumen [[335]].

26. (Currently amended) A method for operating a retraction device [[10]] adapted to reposition body tissues and organs during a surgical procedure, comprising the steps of:

providing a malleable ring member [[15]] having a plurality of bending portions ~~24, 25, 26, 27~~ and a membrane [[60]] fixedly attached around the perimeter of the ring member [[15]], said bending portions ~~24, 25, 26, 27~~ adapted to be twisted, folded, bent or deformed to be inserted into a surgical incision, the membrane being a bias-woven or knitted fabric;

inserting the ring member [[15]] into the surgical incision to provide an operable area; and

twisting, folding, bending or deforming the bending portions ~~24, 25, 26, 27~~ of the ring member [[15]] during the surgical procedure to reposition the body tissues and organs.

27. (Currently amended) The method of claim 26, further comprising the step of removing the ring member [[15]] from the operable area by twisting, folding, bending or deforming the bending portions ~~24, 25, 26, 27~~ and pulling them through the surgical incision after surgery.

28. (Currently amended) The method of claim 26, wherein the membrane [[60]] is a flexible fabric operable to retain the body tissues and organs of different shapes and sizes.

29. (Currently amended) The method of claim 26, wherein the membrane [[60]] is capable to retaining both hard and soft body tissues and organs during surgery.

30. (Currently amended) The method of claim 26, wherein the ring member [[15]] further comprises an internal lumen [[56]] defining a wall [[57]].

31. (Currently amended) The method of claim 30, wherein the wall [[57]] has a circular cross-section or a cross-section of any geometric shape providing a desired bending bias.

32. (Currently amended) The method of claim 30, wherein the ring member [[15]] further comprises a reinforcement member [[315]] placed within the lumen [[56]] to provide additional bending bias.

33. (Currently amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the reinforcement member [[315]] comprises at least a plastic component and a metallic component.

34. (Currently amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the reinforcement member [[315]] is placed in some sections [[28, 29]] of the ring member [[15]] to keep said sections [[28, 29]] substantially straight.